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Subject: OU1 - Last nights meeting
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Attachments: [Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell U.S. EPA's plan for Allied Paper landfill is "unacceptable" MLive.pdf](#)

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Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell: U.S. EPA's plan for Allied Paper landfill is 'unacceptable'

Print (http://blog.mlive.com/kzgazette_impact/print.html?entry=/2013/04/organizers_of_community_forum.html)



(<http://connect.mlive.com/user/EmilyMonacelli/index.html>) By **Emily Monacelli** | emonacel@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/EmilyMonacelli/posts.html>)

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on April 23, 2013 at 7:10 AM, updated April 23, 2013 at 7:17 AM

KALAMAZOO, MI --

Members of the Kalamazoo community gathered at a public forum Monday **to learn more about the Allied Paper landfill site**

(<http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2013/04>)



About 200 people attended a forum at Western Michigan University Monday to learn about the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's plans for the Allied Paper landfill in Kalamazoo.

Emily Monacelli | MLive/Kalamazoo Gazette

(http://www.mlive.com/community_forum_on_allied_pape.html) and to voice concerns with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to consolidate and cap the site in Kalamazoo's Edison neighborhood.

About 200 people joined city leaders and elected officials at the forum, sponsored by the Kalamazoo Peace Center, the Kalamazoo River Cleanup Coalition and WMU's environmental studies program, to talk about the long-contaminated property between Alcott and Cork streets that is part of the 80-mile Allied Paper/Portage

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Creek/Kalamazoo River Superfund site.

The EPA's \$36-million plan calls for PCBs to be dug out from areas around the landfill, then added to the pile of contaminated soil that already is in the landfill, capped and monitored long-term. The EPA estimated in 2011 that to fully clean up the site it would cost \$238 million, a price tag that has since climbed by more than \$100 million to about \$366 million, according to city leaders.

Kalamazoo Mayor Bobby Hopewell told the crowd the Kalamazoo City Commission would stand behind them and protect them. The waste doesn't belong in a neighborhood, he said.

"The bottom line is we stopped them once and we're going to stop them again," Hopewell said of the EPA, referencing a past plan to dump PCB-laden soil from Plainwell on the Allied site.

"This is unacceptable," Hopewell said. "It's poison in the middle of the neighborhood. It's unacceptable."

Hopewell told people in attendance to write their elected officials and include pictures of their children.

"This is your example right here," Hopewell said, pointing to a little boy in the audience. "This is why we can't have this."

Charles Ide, a professor of biological sciences at WMU, said PCBs can cause birth defects including lower birth rate, slower growth of infants in the first three months and neuro-developmental abnormalities.

Ide said the failure to remove PCB-laden material could increase the human health risk in Kalamazoo.

Duane Hampton, a geosciences professor at WMU, called the EPA's preferred plan one that would "shuffle dirt around and cover it with an inadequate cover." Hampton said, however, that most of the community has expressed a desire to see all of the 1.5 cubic yards of contaminated soil removed. Other alternatives the EPA can settle on range from doing nothing to the site to digging up the contaminated soil from the outer edges of the site and hauling that away, plus adding a new, engineered cover.

Hampton told the crowd they would probably see the EPA's preferred option unless they make a commitment to fight it.

"To get the EPA to buy 5 (total removal of the contaminated soil), that's going to take serious commitment ... are we up to it?" Hampton said. "We'll find out tonight, next week and the next few months."

Hampton also said he hopes the EPA's revised feasibility study, which was set to come out in April but has been postponed, will address the threat of groundwater contamination.



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The site, which the paper mills had used for about 100 years, holds 1.5 million cubic yards of contaminated soil with varying concentrations of PCBs, the equivalent of 460 Olympic size swimming pools, said Bruce Merchant, city of Kalamazoo public services director.

The EPA's plans include taking away the metal sheets holding everything in place, digging up about 270,000 yards of contaminated soil from areas around the landfill and piling that on top of waste in the landfill, then putting a liner on the top, Merchant said. He said city officials have two concerns about that plan -- groundwater and surface water.

Merchant said city leaders remain concerned about an aquifer that supplies about 40 percent of the Kalamazoo area's drinking water that sits under the site. He said the drinking water does not have PCBs in it.

Any landfill that can take the contaminated soil has to have something to contain the waste, low permeability soil, a cover to protect it and groundwater monitoring, he said.

The EPA has estimated total removal would cost \$336 million, up from an initial estimate of \$240 million. A private company, Environmental Quality based in Wayne, Mich., has told the city it could haul all of the toxic waste to its specialty landfill for \$116 million.

"We think there's too many questions yet for us to say what's reasonable here," Merchant said. "We think we need answers to our questions about protection of the groundwater, protection of the surface water."

Merchant said city leaders now are hoping **Congressman Fred Upton, R-St. Joseph, and Democratic Sens. Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin** (http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2013/04/allied_press_conference.html) will send a letter to the EPA on the city's behalf. He said city leaders are planning a trip to Washington D.C. to appeal to them in person.

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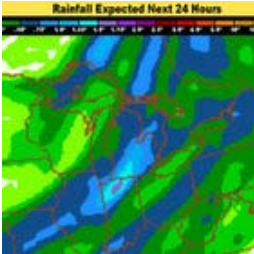




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